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September 23, 2024

Lacy Lemoosh Project
St Joe Ranger District
Idaho Panhandle National Forest
222 South 7th Street Ste.1
St Maries, ID 83861

Project Leader,

Please accept the following comments by Bennett Lumber Products Inc. on the Lacy Lemoosh Draft EA. Bennett Lumber Products is a Small Business family owned sawmill with mills in Princeton Idaho and Clarkston Washington. Both mills are extremely dependent on Federal timber to supply its mills. Currently all volume under contract at both Bennett Lumber mills is in the form of USFS Timber Sale Contracts. Bennett Lumber Princeton has a long history of working with and purchasing numerous sales from the St Joe Ranger District. A strong sale program from the St Joe District is vital to Bennett Lumber's long term saw log supply and survival.

Bennett Lumber strongly supports the Lacy Lemoosh Project. Bennett Lumber Princeton is the closest mill to the proposed project area and believes that the area is in great need of forest management. Besides the economic benefits to rural communities, forest management in this area will drastically improve forest health and protect the local community by reducing hazardous fuels currently in Wildland Urban Interface.

While Bennett Lumber does support this project, we do feel that more area within the project landscape should be considered for treatment. The Proposed Action has significant decreases in acres treated and volumes from the original Scoping Proposed Action. As previously stated, the majority of the Project area is in need of management to improve forest health and prevent wildfire in the Wildland Urban Interface. Bennett Lumber encourages the Forest Service to consider more treatment acres as originally proposed.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue so important to our company and the local community.

Sincerely,

Tom Biltonen
Bennett Lumber Products Inc.